

# THE LOWELL OFFERING.

JUNE, 1844.

## LETTERS FROM SUSAN.

### LETTER SECOND.

LOWELL, April —, —.

DEAR MARY: In my last I told you I would write again, and say more of my life here; and this I will now attempt to do.

I went into the mill to work a few days after I wrote to you. It looked very pleasant at first, the rooms were so light, spacious, and clean, the girls so pretty and neatly dressed, and the machinery so brightly polished or nicely painted. The plants in the windows, or on the overseer's bench or desk, gave a pleasant aspect to things. You will wish to know what work I am doing. I will tell you of the different kinds of work.

There is, first, the carding-room, where the cotton flies most, and the girls get the dirtiest. But this is easy, and the females are allowed time to go out at night before the bell rings—on Saturday night at least, if not on all other nights. Then there is the spinning-room, which is very neat and pretty. In this room are the spinners and doffers. The spinners watch the frames; keep them clean, and the threads mended if they break. The doffers take off the full bobbins, and put on the empty ones. They have nothing to do in the long intervals when the frames are in motion, and can go out to their boarding-houses, or do any thing else that they like. In some of the factories the spinners do their own doffing, and when this is the case they work no harder than the weavers. These last have the hardest time of all—or can have, if they choose to take charge of three or four looms, instead of the one pair which is the allotment. And they are the most constantly confined. The spinners and dressers have but the weavers to keep supplied, and then their work can stop. The dressers never work before breakfast, and they stay out a great deal in the afternoons. The drawers-in, or girls who draw the threads through the harnesses, also work in the dressing-room, and they all have very good wages—better than the weavers who have but the usual work. The dressing-rooms are very neat, and the frames move with a gentle undulating motion which is really graceful. But these rooms are kept very warm, and are disagreeably scented with the “sizing,” or starch, which stiffens the “beams,” or unwoven webs. There are many plants in these rooms, and it is really a good green-house for them. The dressers are generally quite tall girls, and must have pretty tall minds too, as their work requires much care and attention.

I could have had work in the dressing-room, but chose to be a weaver; and I will tell you why. I disliked the closer air of the dressing-room, though I might have become accustomed to that. I could not learn to dress so quickly as I could to weave, nor have work of my own so soon, and should have had to stay with Mrs. C. two or three weeks before I could go in at all, and I did not like to be "lying upon my oars" so long. And, more than this, when I get well learned I can have extra work, and make double wages, which you know is quite an inducement with some.

Well, I went into the mill, and was put to learn with a very patient girl—a clever old maid. I should be willing to be one myself if I could be as good as she is. You cannot think how odd every thing seemed to me. I wanted to laugh at every thing, but did not know what to make sport of first. They set me to threading shuttles, and tying weaver's knots, and such things, and now I have improved so that I can take care of one loom. I could take care of two if I only had eyes in the back part of my head, but I have not got used to "looking two ways of a Sunday" yet.

At first the hours seemed very long, but I was so interested in learning that I endured it very well; and when I went out at night the sound of the mill was in my ears, as of crickets, frogs, and jewsharps, all mingled together in strange discord. After that it seemed as though cotton-wool was in my ears, but now I do not mind it at all. You know that people learn to sleep with the thunder of Niagara in their ears, and a cotton mill is no worse, though you wonder that we do not have to hold our breath in such a noise.

It makes my feet ache and swell to stand so much, but I suppose I shall get accustomed to that too. The girls generally wear old shoes about their work, and you know nothing is easier; but they almost all say that when they have worked here a year or two they have to procure shoes a size or two larger than before they came. The right hand, which is the one used in stopping and starting the loom, becomes larger than the left; but in other respects the factory is not detrimental to a young girl's appearance. Here they look delicate, but not sickly; they laugh at those who are much exposed, and get pretty brown; but I, for one, had rather be brown than pure white. I never saw so many pretty looking girls as there are here. Though the number of men is small in proportion there are many marriages here, and a great deal of courting. I will tell you of this last sometime.

You wish to know minutely of our hours of labor. We go in at five o'clock; at seven we come out to breakfast; at half-past seven we return to our work, and stay until half-past twelve. At one, or quarter-past one four months in the year, we return to our work, and stay until seven at night. Then the evening is all our own, which is more than some laboring girls can say, who think nothing is more tedious than a factory life.

When I first came here, which was the last of February, the girls ate their breakfast before they went to their work. The first of March they came out at the present breakfast hour, and the twentieth of March they ceased to "light up" the rooms, and come out between six and seven o'clock.

You ask if the girls are contented here: I ask you, if you know of *any one* who is perfectly contented. Do you remember the old story of the philosopher, who offered a field to the person who was contented with his lot; and, when one claimed it, he asked him why, if he was so perfectly satisfied, he wanted his field. The girls here are not contented; and



there is no disadvantage in their situation which they do not perceive as quickly, and lament as loudly, as the sternest opponents of the factory system do. They would scorn to say they were contented, if asked the question; for it would compromise their Yankee spirit—their pride, penetration, independence, and love of “freedom and equality” to say that they were *contented* with such a life as this. Yet, withal, they are cheerful. I never saw a happier set of beings. They appear blithe in the mill, and out of it. If you see one of them, with a very long face, you may be sure that it is because she has heard bad news from home, or because her beau has vexed her. But, if it is a Lowell trouble, it is because she has failed in getting off as many “sets” or “pieces” as she intended to have done; or because she had a sad “break-out,” or “break-down,” in her work, or something of that sort.

You ask if the work is not disagreeable. Not when one is accustomed to it. It tried my patience sadly at first, and does now when it does not run well; but, in general, I like it very much. It is easy to do, and does not require very violent exertion, as much of our farm work does.

You also ask how I get along with the girls here. Very well indeed; only we came near having a little flurry once. You know I told you I lodged in the “long attic.” Well, a little while ago, there was a place vacated in a pleasant lower chamber. Mrs. C. said that it was my “chum’s” turn to go down stairs to lodge, unless she would waive her claim in favor of me. You must know that here they get up in the world by getting down, which is what the boys in our debating society used to call a paradox. Clara, that is the girl’s name, was not at all disposed to give up her rights, but maintained them staunchly. I had nothing to do about it—the girls in the lower room liked me, and disliked Clara, and were determined that it should not be at all pleasant weather there if she did come. Mrs. C. was in a dilemma. Clara’s turn came first. The other two girls in the chamber were sisters, and would not separate, so they were out of the question. I wanted to go, and knew Clara would not be happy with them. But I thought what was my duty to do. She was not happy now, and would not be if deprived of her privilege. She had looked black at me for several days, and slept with her face to the wall as many nights. I went up to her and said, “Clara, take your things down into the lower chamber, and tell the girls that *I will not come*. It is your turn now, and mine will come in good time.”

Clara was mollified in an instant. “No,” said she; “I will not go now. They do not wish me to come, and I had rather stay here.” After this we had quite a contest—I trying to persuade Clara to go, and she trying to persuade me, and I “*got beat*.” So now I have a pleasanter room, and am quite a favorite with all the girls. They have given me some pretty plants, and they go out with me whenever I wish it, so that I feel quite happy.

You think we must live very nice here to have plum-cake, &c. The plum-cake, and crackers, and such things as the bakers bring upon the corporations, are not as nice as we have in the country, and I presume are much cheaper. I seldom eat any thing that is not cooked in the family. I should not like to tell you the stories they circulate here about the bakers, unless I *knew* that they were true. Their brown bread is the best thing that I have tasted of their baking.

You see that I have been quite *minute* in this letter, though I hardly

liked your showing the former to old Deacon Gale, and 'Squire Smith, and those old men. It makes me feel afraid to write you all I should like to, when I think so many eyes are to pore over my humble sheet. But if their motives are good, and they can excuse all defects, why I will not forbid.

'Squire Smith wishes to know what sort of men our superintendents are. I know very well what he thinks of them, and what their reputation is up our way. I am not personally acquainted with any of them; but, from what I hear, I have a good opinion of them. I suppose they are not faultless, neither are those whom they superintend; but they are not the overbearing tyrants which many suppose them to be. The abuse of them, which I hear, is so very low that I think it must be unjust and untrue; and I do frequently hear them spoken of as *men*—whole-hearted full-souled men. Tell 'Squire Smith they are not what he would be in their places—that they treat their operatives better than he does his “hired girls,” and associate with them on terms of as much equality. But I will tell you who are almost universally unpopular: the “runners,” as they are called, or counting-room boys. I suppose they are little whipper-snappers who will grow better as they grow older.

My paper is filling up, and I must close by begging your pardon for speaking of the Methodists as having lost their simplicity of attire. It was true, nevertheless, for I have not seen one of the old “Simon Pure” Methodist bonnets since I have been here. But they may be as consistent as other denominations. Had few of us follow in the steps of the primitive Christians.

Yours as ever,

SUSAN.

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## RANDOM THOUGHTS.

IN conversing with persons, who have passed their lives in much the same sphere, how differently do we generally find their opinions upon the same subjects. And this may be particularly observed with regard to mental qualities, habits, and pursuits. Poetry, for instance, is regarded by some as the overflowing of a constantly inspired mind; and they think that the gifted individual can, at any moment, by a withdrawal of the barrier which he has placed around his thoughts, present to the world the bright creations of his fancy; while, by others, it is thought to be the effect of a sort of mental spasm which can be neither hastened, nor retarded, or even by any means avoided. While some worship the poet as an incarnation of the sublime and beautiful, others look upon him as upon a lunatic or fool.

A richly *cultivated* mind, though revered by some, even of the most ignorant, is viewed by others as the mere result of unwearied diligence, and even as such unworthy of much respect. Some think that education can wholly metamorphose a man, and convert a dunce into a genius. I once knew a man who thought that if his son (a young man of very inferior mind) could but get through college, he would certainly come out of it perfectly fitted to take his stand among the literati of the day; and great was the old man's disappointment when, at the close of a long course of



study, the graduate could not obtain the situation of pastor to a country parish.

The world often concedes to the man of intellect a deference withheld from those whose superiority consists in other than mental possessions, yet there are those who refuse the tribute of reverence and admiration to the mind most worthy of it.

Some think it is only by *searching* that we can find out wisdom, while others speak of minds darkened by knowledge, and shut out by the veil of human theories from all perception of truth. "Have you learned any thing new to-night?" I was once asked, at my return from a scientific lecture. "Yes—many things. The lecturer appeared to be a man of intellect and information." "Well," she added, "any fool could have told you the same if he had only learned it." "Certainly," was the reply, "but it is not every fool who can learn." But many will tell of the dull sleepy boys who, by the closest diligence and untiring perseverance have become the lights of their age, and an honor to their race. And this is all true; but is not this very power of application, this ability to keep the faculties concentrated upon one subject, and steadily to pursue the path of knowledge through watchful days and sleepless nights, is not this, I ask, an inherent faculty of their minds?"

"What," said I to a young friend who had just listened to a lecture for students—"what did he tell you?" "Why, he told us a great deal about Benjamin Franklin, and his dipping tallow candles; but one thing *I* knew, and that was that if *I* should dip candles to all eternity I should not be a Benjamin Franklin." This was a pettish answer, and the speaker well knew that it was not *by* dipping candles, but *in spite of it*, that Franklin made himself the admiration of his own and other nations. Yet true it is that many boys might pursue the same avocations, read the same books, spend the same time in mental improvement, without rising far above mediocrity. But it may be suggested that if talent and perseverance are alike represented as original qualities of mind, our respect for intellectual men may decrease. I, for one, do not reverence the possessor of talent unless he uses well the gift. Effort can increase alike the faculty, and the ability to exercise it, and more respect is due to the man of moderate powers, who is constantly increasing in knowledge and usefulness, than to a Byron or Voltaire, whose splendid intellects have left but a perverting influence on the minds of their admirers. But it is often said, that to make people believe they can become something great is the surest way to elevate them. "Aim at the sun," they say, "and your arrow will rise higher than if you fix your mark upon the earth." But to *hit the sun* we know to be an impossibility, while one thing is possible and *true*, and that is, that at every trial the arrow will be sent higher. Ought not this *truth* to be a sufficient stimulant, *that every exertion improves every mind*?

How fearful are some of truth, as though she could injure them, and as if error could in the end prove advantageous to any one. May not some former Galileo rest "unnoticed and unknown," because he feared that the knowledge of the fact that the earth did move around the stationary sun might destroy confidence in revelation? And may not some other Martin Luther now lie "unhonored and unsung," unless in popish masses, because he feared that an exposure of the errors connected with his religion might destroy all faith? Have not geology, phrenology, magnetism, &c., been regarded by some as things not to be inquired into, be-

cause they might be found at variance with theories which must remain *unquestioned*?

But let us not fear to seek for truth. We may search long for her well, and it may be deep, but she *is* at the bottom of it; and when we have found her let us not throw sackcloth over her fair form, but show her forth in her robes of light, and fearlessly leave the result to Him who is all truth. \*

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### THE PARTY.

"Did you enjoy yourself well this evening?" said I to a young lady who attended the last meeting of the Improvement Circle.

"Not so well as I have sometimes," was her reply.

"Were not the communications good?" I asked.

"Yes," said she, "they were a *little too good*; that was why I disliked them; they were all so nice, and instructive, and all that, that I was fairly tired of the last of them. I wish that old maid Betsey would write again, or some other funny old soul, and then I should never be tired."

"Why do you not write?" said I to her. "You can make sport enough for *us*, and why not some for the circle?"

"Oh!" she replied, "I can't write any thing funny. I wish I could—but I know you can."

"I don't know about that," said I, "but I will try; and if you think I *can* write any thing which would interest your circle it shall be forth-coming—only give me a subject."

"Write about old times," said she, "when you was a girl, and went round to parties, huskings, apple-bees, and quilting-matches."

"Well," said I to her, "I have been thinking this long time that girls now-a-days don't enjoy themselves half so well as they did when I was young. I do really believe they live a miserable life; and to think of begging, for their amusement, an account of the pastimes of their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers for aught I know. Those were indeed good old times, when girls were not afraid to wear the same thick woollen gown winter after winter; and in summer a 'long-short' of tow and linen, with a skirt of cotton and wool. In summer they could go barefooted if occasion required; and wear in winter a stout pair of cow-hide shoes, if there was a very deep snow-drift between the house and barn; and they had great round faces, and bright eyes, and red cheeks, and would not have been thought marriageable if they had weighed less than a hundred and thirty pounds. But they could fly round at merry-makings a vast deal quicker and lighter than your lank, thin-faced, sharp-sided, wasp-waisted, withered, wilted, dried-up beings, who look as though they had just undergone the Egyptian process of hollowing out, and drying up, and now need to stand in the air awhile to give them an appearance of *some* solidity. Only to think of your having to ask an old woman like me to help you amuse yourselves and keep your circle a-going. I should think you'd be ashamed of it. But as I do pity you all from the very bottom of my heart, I will endeavor to do something to promote your enjoyment.



And now to begin at the beginning, for I am afraid I shall be dreadful tired before I get through, and must make my story as short as possible. If you want to know about our parties I will tell you. When I wanted to have one I used to begin three or four days beforehand, 'Father, may I have a party at such a time?' for I knew that if I could only get his consent mother's and grandmother's would come as matter of course. At first my reply would be, 'No, no—can't have it—mustn't think of it—too much noise—makes confusion—your grandmother don't want to be disturbed, nor your mother to be troubled; so you must say nothing more about it.'

'But, father,' I would reply, 'I must have it—and I shall think of nothing else till I do have one—and grandmother's so deaf that the noise wont disturb her, and mother shall not be troubled, for I will do all the work myself, and clean up before and after them, and now do say *yes*.'

My father was a man of few words, and withal quite fond of his mad-cap daughter, and 'yes' was the shortest reply he could make to all solicitations; but I seldom obtained it till I had gained over grandmother and aunt Nabby from being enemies to my project to be firm allies, for mother was always neutral until the case was decided; and when at length I coaxed the one to say, 'La me! why don't you let the gal deu as she wants teu,' and the other to respond, 'I'm sure we are all willing if you are;' and had fairly wearied him by my importunities, I usually carried the day. Then there was the room to clean, and the candlesticks to scour, and the refreshments to prepare, and the invitations to send; and, after all had been done, the evening would at length arrive, as all evenings will if we live, and have patience to wait for them.

Grandmother's room was of course to be a *sanctum sanctorum*, but as some of the great girls might want to come in and talk with her, or the school-master (if he was there) to take a pinch of her snuff, and drink a tumbler of my father's nice old cider, she was of course prepared for visitors. Her bed was made up so high as to reach almost to the low ceiling, and a pair of clean snow-white pillow-cases set off the light pillows to the best advantage. Her common black woollen gown was pinned a little tighter than usual, and her brown neckerchief was folded more smoothly across her breast. A clean white cap, and a newly ironed checked apron, were also put on. She took as usual her seat in the large arm-chair, at the further corner of the fire-place, with a great white sleepy looking cat purring one side of her, and a large brown dog stretched at full length on the other side. Her knitting-work was in her hand, with the ball pinned to her knee, and a cob hollowed for a knitting-sheath stuck between her apron-strings on one side.

If father and mother could not be persuaded to go visiting they were duly installed—the one in a large flag-bottomed 'roundabout' on the opposite side of the fire-place, and the other in a low rocking-chair in front of it. My father would doff his old blue frock, and put on his butternut-colored coat, tie his cotton bandanna around his neck, smooth his gray hairs, and then sit down with his newspaper just as if there was to be no party, nor noise, nor tumult; and my mother, with her woollen gown exchanged for a calico in honor of the occasion, would take her large basket of stockings and quietly sit down darning them. The men-folks went to the tavern to talk politics, and "the boy" washed his face, combed his hair, greased his shoes, brushed his trousers, and made himself at home

with the best of us. Aunt Nabby was like a guardian spirit, watching constantly around us, and cautioning us not to set the house on fire, nor break the looking-glass, nor smash the windows, nor knock over the light-stand, nor run against the best table, nor do any other mischievous or careless tricks.

After all had assembled, and were seated in due form around the three sides of the best fore-room, and in the corners of the huge fire-place, there was usually silence for about the space of half an hour. Then Jock, or Adam, or Peter, or Tristram, or whoever intended to be the wag of the evening, would begin to say something about a Quaker meeting; and the ice being thus broken I would go out, and get the pewter plate, and having numbered my guests, I mustered courage to stand up in the middle of the floor, twirl it round, and call upon No. such-a-one to catch it ere it fell. Then commenced the tug of war, and after that *silence* was by no means the motto.

Blind man's buff; Hunt the squirrel; Button, button, who's got the button? Touch and run! Are you pleased or displeased? were among the games which served to pass away our time.

‘Come, Philander, let's be marching,’

and

‘Here sits a young lady down to sleep,  
She wants a gentleman to keep her awake,’

were also quite popular. Then there was the marrying to do, and the long-sided boys, with their long red hands and wrists hanging out of their short-jacket sleeves would stand up beside their chubby partners, and were quickly ‘joined in Hymen's bands.’

There were numerous ways of performing the ceremony, but I shall never forget the manner in which my friend, Grace Hanson was united to Seth Baldwin. Seth was a great black bristly cross-looking fellow, and Grace more pleasant in her looks. Thomas Ball, or rather ‘Thomas the Rhymer,’ as we used to call him, from his aptitude at making verses, was called upon to perform the ceremony. Thomas the Rhymer, like his Scotch namesake of old, was a chap of no common genius, and if he had not so early displayed his gift at jingling, he would have been pronounced decidedly love-cracked. This time we of course expected an impromptu effusion, and were not disappointed. I do not recollect all of it, but the first two lines, which were pronounced in a slow firm emphatic tone, were,

‘Now by the old Levitical law,  
I marry the nigger to the squaw.’

Seth looked as if Grace was by no means the means of grace to him, and poor Grace herself appeared to think that Seth was rather a graceless husband. But the great blessing attending these early marriages, was the fact that they were not for better and worse, but only for better, and the knot could be as easily untied as it had been tied.

After nuts, apples, pears, and sweet cider, had been fully attended to, the party usually broke up, the boys clapping on their little slouched ‘popple’ hats, and waiting outside the door for the exit of the girls, who tardily made their egress, just as if they did not like a walk by moonlight. When the last visitor had departed I would stand watching at the window,



to see how they had paired off, and wondering how long it would be before I also should be invited out.

These were the pastimes of the days when I was too young to go to the quiltings, huskings, &c., though there was but little difference in them, excepting that the plays of the latter were preceded by labor."

PATTY.

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## THE FORGOTTEN.

### A SKETCH.

I SAW her first in the brilliant circle of taste and fashion; and even there she shone as its brightest gem, and was valued as its choicest ornament. It was not alone the exquisite beauty of her face and form, which had enthroned her as the ideal of the wealthy and refined; for these, though they may secure admiration, can never long command both homage and respect. But it was her superiority of talent and education, the combined influence of intellect and beauty which had gained for her the adulation of the lip and heart.

I saw her next in the quiet of her paternal home, and here, as in a wider sphere, I viewed the darling and the idol. They were proud of her beauty, of her accomplishments, and of her fame; but they loved her for the warm affections which filled her heart, and were ever gushing forth in the sweet offices of domestic love.

It was she who ever soothed them in perplexity and grief; it was she who enlivened their hours of solitude and gloom; and it was she who graced their festive scenes, as unenvied as she was unsurpassed.

I saw her next, where I little thought to meet this favorite of Nature and of Fortune; and oh, how lovely was her appearance there! It was in the cot of one who was old, and blind, and poor—the habitation of the childless, and the widow. And here I found each hour was spent which could be secured from the claims of home and society. \* \* \*

Years passed—and I had been a wanderer from my own loved land, and when at length I returned to the home of my fathers, my first inquiries were for the known and loved of former days. I thought also of her whom I had seen in the commencement of her sunny career of youth and beauty; so pure was she, so lovely and unaffected; and I sighed to think that a dazzling world might have corrupted that once guileless heart, or that it might have turned embittered from its hollow heartlessness.

I sought her where I had found her, in the circles of gaiety and wealth; but she was not there: and when I had uttered that name which seemed but yesterday a magic phrase, my heart sickened within me, to learn how soon they could forget.

I turned away, and went to the home of her youth. She was not there: and though, with this exception, their circle was complete, her name was never breathed. I spoke of the past, but they avoided the theme; and I feared to pursue it, for I knew not what string had been most jarred in "the spirit harp." She could have been guilty of but one wrong—she

might have followed the dictates of her own warm heart, and united her fate to one who was poor. Or she might have died; and their unsubdued hearts were endeavoring to attain a stoical calmness, by refraining from allusions to her whom they could not submissively resign to the Giver of the boon.

But I sought her once again. It was in the humble cot where I had last seen her; and here I found—not indeed her, but a deep and cherished remembrance. Yes! she was still remembered, but it was by one to whom her beauty was nothing, for she had never viewed it; one to whom her intellect was naught, for it was unappreciated, and of course unvalued. But it was the remembrance of goodness which had survived when that of intellect and beauty had perished. I did but touch upon the past, and a deep spring of thought and feeling was instantaneously opened, at which I eagerly drank. She spake long and earnestly, and I was moved, for the language of deep feeling is ever eloquent.

“You say,” continued she, “that she is forgotten by those who were once so proud of their lovely idol, but there is one heart in which her memory will live till its throbbings have ceased forever. In the deep stillness of the night, the holy words which she has read come back to my soul, and they bring joy unutterable; and they are in my mind when the lonely days pass tediously by, hushing the murmurings which are wont to rise from the depths of the troubled heart. And when the glad rays of an unclouded sun shine warmly from the sky, I think of her, whose presence was once more cheering than the summer sunbeam. I remember well when she last entered this low abode. Her step was faltering, and her voice was low. She told me she was dying,—that the beauty others had admired was fading fast away; and that her heart had long forsaken the scenes of mirth and revelry; and that her desire had ever been to fix it upon that world where beauty never decays, and pleasure never satiates. ‘And I shall see you soon,’ she added, ‘for though years may intervene, they will seem short in heaven. And you will also see me, for every faculty is perfect in that blessed abode; and I shall be arrayed in loveliness far more brilliant than I have ever appeared to mortal eyes, and youth which never changes will clothe us both in graces, which will be eternal.’ ”

STELLA.

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### COWPER.

How very easy a thing it is to be good upon paper, in comparison with the exertion and self-denial requisite to the attainment of such excellence in actual life. It was a very easy thing for Cowper to say that he would rather *be* than *have* a slave, &c., though we cannot feel certain what he might have done had the alternative been his. With the kind Lady Herbeth ever studying new plans for his happiness, and generously contributing of her wealth to his gratification; and the patient, watchful, untiring Mrs. Unwin exercising her sleepless vigilance in his behalf; and countless other friends all anxious to promote his happiness, he could not know, in the seclusion of his study, what he would have done if he must either *own* or *be* a slave.



## WOMAN'S REVENGE.

"Oh! woman wronged will cherish hate  
 More deep and dark than manhood may;  
 And when the mockery of fate  
 Hath left revenge its chosen way,  
 Then the fell curse which years have nursed  
 Full on the spoiler's head will burst."

How very different are the descriptions of woman which we see in the various poems which have been written to portray her characteristics! In some she has been represented as an angel arrayed in the garb of humanity; in a robe which, though beautiful to the eye, yet is one which subjects her to privation, weakness, and sorrow. In others, she is a fiend, appearing in "the livery of heaven;" a whited sepulchre, most beautifully garished, but filled with all uncleanness; a pool, whose depths are filled with stagnant corruption, but whose surface smiles in the bright sunbeams, or sleeps beneath the pale light of luna, as tranquilly as if the slime it bore beneath that unruffled mirror were never to engender some loathsome monster.

In the passage we have quoted she is depicted with a pencil which portrays one of the darkest and fiercest passions of humanity as peculiarly hers in strength and duration. Though she must yield the palm to her lordly master in superiority of intellect, of physical strength, of energy of selfish sentiments, (and willingly,) of the animal propensities, yet in this one dire trait, in the gratification of "fell revenge," she is not only his equal, but even his superior. Her breast is a harbor, a dwelling-place, nay, even a nursery for the monster, where it may rear in secresy and security its brood of curses, and watch unmolested its opportunity for destruction.

But is this true? Is the vivid portrait a correct likeness? Is the dark spot a stain impressed by the painter upon his picture, or is it but a shadow in the eye of the beholder? Look around upon the hundreds of injured wives, of heart-broken mothers, of gentle daughters, condemned to singleness and misery by a parent's selfish ambition and cupidity, and of sisters wronged by brothers of their rightful inheritance, and left to mourn in silence that man should be so base. Ask these if they would be revenged; and a melancholy smile will dawn upon the wan countenance, as they tell you that love is stronger than hate—that from these they will bear an injury, and still forgive and love the oppressor.

Ask the grave if the fair form it has just received upon its bosom, laid down in peace with all, even with him who aimed the blow which stretched her upon that last resting-place; and if it could answer it would say, that rather than rise to inflict vengeance upon the spoiler, it would draw the shroud more closely around its stiffened limbs, and press more firmly together the livid lips, before these lips should utter a word, or those limbs perform an action, which would bring upon that reckless one a return for the injury he has wrought.

Oh! woman wronged will *not* cherish hate so deep and dark as manhood *will*, and when "the mockery of fate" has left him to triumph in unrequited baseness, her prayers are that the guilty son, brother, father,

husband, or lover, may never be brought to feel those pangs which he has so wantonly inflicted upon her.

If there is a difference in the feelings of a woman injured by one of the other sex towards him, and those which would be aroused in him or her by one of their own sex, it is, that from him she must and *can* bear more; for it is a law of her nature to bear from him without resistance or complaint.

On the contrary, man feels that woman was made for his pleasure. If it please him to love and protect and cherish her, he does it, for the gratification of his own feelings; if, on the contrary, he would be better pleased to abuse, deceive, and torment her, he is seldom restrained by the fear of awakening in her bosom a rankling hatred, which, when by long years it has been jealously nursed, full on his head at length will burst.

Sir Walter Scott has not portrayed, in all his works, a more correct and natural trait, than when he makes Fergus Mac Ivar, with all his love for his sister Flora, and all his pride in her beauty, talents and native dignity, selfishly calculating how much these may be made to redound to his advantage.

The last Vich Jan Vohr was in this not worse nor meaner than most men. They almost all appear to think that we were made *solely* for their benefit. It may be so, and yet I do not like to see, as I recently did in a work professedly written for the benefit of young men, the idea inculcated, that they should never be so impolite as to introduce into their conversation with females subjects of a difficult character. They should go into their society to *recruit* their spirits, and *REST* their intellects. Yes, this is too often done; and if right, it is also so natural, that it scarcely requires a recommendation to secure its practice.

But though in this, and many other ways, we may often feel that injustice is done to our intellects, feelings, and fortunes, still let the lines of the *poetess* be contrasted, to our honor, with those of the *poet*, whom we have before quoted:

“ Her lot is on you—*silent* tears to weep,  
And *patient* smiles to wear through suffering’s hour;  
And sunless riches, from affection’s deep,  
To pour on broken reeds—a *wasted* shower;

\* \* \* \* \*

*Meekly* to bear with wrong, to cheer decay,  
And oh! to *love* through all things.”

ADAM.

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### PYTHAGORAS, THE SAMIAN SAGE.

PYTHAGORAS was a native of Samos, an island of the Ægean Sea, now the Archipelago, and flourished about five hundred years B. C., or one hundred years before Socrates. He travelled in Egypt, and after his return to Samos established a school in which he taught politics and morals. He afterwards went to Italy, where he established his school at Crotana, in Magna Grecia. The system which he established was called the Italic school. The pupils, who were six hundred in number, dwelt in one public



building, and held their property in common. Their business for each day, was very regularly planned. They were divided into probationers, and initiated; and the latter only were admitted to all the privileges of the order, and made acquainted with its highest knowledge.

The Italic school under the name of philosophy included every object of human knowledge; but Pythagoras considered music and astronomy of especial value. He is also supposed to have possessed some correct views of astronomy, agreeing with the true Copernican system. The beautiful fancy of the music of the spheres is attributed to him. It supposed that the planets striking on the ether through which they pass must produce a sound. This varies according to their different magnitudes, velocities, and relative distances; these differences were all adjusted with perfect regularity and exact proportion, so that the movements of the bodies produced the richest tones of harmony; not heard, however, by mortal ears.

He is said to have been very mystical, and was the first among the Grecian philosophers who dared assert that the soul is immortal, and that spirit is a constituent principle of the universe. One of his peculiarities was the doctrine of emanation. God is the soul of the universe, pervading all things, incorporeal; from Him emanated four different degrees of intelligences—inferior gods, demons, heroes, and men. Another of his doctrines was metempsychosis, or the transmigration of the soul. Abstinence and self-government he strongly urged. His records and books were afterwards said to have been sold to Plato; and some have supposed that the principles which he first promulgated, and which were improved by Plato and Socrates, might (if left unobscured by the mysticism of the sophists) have led to those correct views which have since been revealed to us by Jesus Christ.

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"VOICES OF THE NIGHT."

"Well may dreams present us fictions;  
Since our waking moments teem  
With such fanciful convictions  
As makes life itself a dream."

*Thomas Campbell.*

I SLEPT; and in my slumbers were echoes of the voices which had sounded through the chambers of my soul during the day—there were shadows of the clouds which had darkened my spirit in waking hours. I was alone upon a dark and troubled sea—the seething waves boiled angrily around me—the sky lowered black and heavily over me—there was darkness around me, and thicker darkness in the distance. I floated, sad and listlessly, upon the ocean, for a power upheld me distinct from mine own will. I would fain have sunk into the ocean, for in its depths there might be much of hidden beauty. But the waves tossed me around, and might not swallow me up.

At length they bore me where I could just discern a distant light. I approached nearer, and saw that brilliant flames pierced through the black waves, and blazed upward to the sky. Upon the murky clouds were hung robes of radiance; and tongues of fire leaped upward to the heavens. I

fixed mine eye upon that living pyramid of glory, and prayed that the waves might bear me there. But, as I floated through the darkness, I saw, stealing through the gloom, a vision of softened beauty. I looked intently, and saw that I was approaching the shore of a lovely land. Its blossoming groves, its verdant fields, its sparkling founts, were faintly revealed through the dense gloom, with the mild radiance of a fading rainbow. My attention was divided between the beauteous isle and the volcanic peak of fire.

Suddenly I became aware that two barques were passing by me. The prow of one was turned toward the isle, of the other to the flaming mountain. Upon the decks of the first were a hopeful joyous group, and they sang with sounds of gaiety. There were brothers and sisters arm in arm, there were parents and children in affectionate embrace, there were loving friends side by side, there were husbands and wives linked "hand in hand and heart to heart." They called to me with jocund shouts to join their band, and reach the lovely isle, now becoming still nearer and more distinctly visible in its bright beauty. My heart leaped toward them, and, with the impulse of the moment, I stretched out my hand. But as I turned my eye fell upon the group who stood upon the other ship. They heeded me not; but stood, each apart from the others, with mantles closely wrapped about them, and their dark eyes fixed upon the mount of fire. A strange fascination impelled me towards those mysterious beings, and their destined bourne. I turned from the happy group, who would have aided my onward way, and the smiling land whose lovely shores stretched forward to receive them, and struggled toward the staggering straining barque, which was forcing its way through more tempestuous waves. I strove and gasped, and at length I reached the silent ship. I looked back, and saw that the other vessel had reached the shore, and the gay voyagers were soon lost in its atmosphere of brightness. I turned to my companions, but they received me with unbroken silence. Then I rivetted my gaze upon the heaven-aspiring flames, and gave up my soul to the one desire to reach that glorious shrine. But, as the ship strained heavily on, the waves grew higher and fiercer; the darkness more intense, and the fire more fitfully visible. Occasional gleams of its brightness illuminated the tops of mountain waves, and sometimes a sinking of the sea revealed it in all its splendor; but this was not long, and soon there was but the dense gloom and the black ocean before me. I turned my eye backward, but the bright shore was lost in the distance, and there were no more vessels upon the waters. There was but gloom around me—darkness like a thick curtain over the heavens—darkness like a heavy shroud upon the face of the deep; and darkness, like a mourning veil, upon the countenances of all around me. My heart sank within me. I had abandoned the shore, and might never reach the flaming mount. I laid myself upon the vessel's floor; and, when it gave a fearful plunge, and I felt the waters gurgling around me, I should have rejoiced had I not—awoke.

Again I slumbered, and the spirit of Sleep bore me, upon its swift pinions, to a distant temple. Its courts were filled with a countless throng, moving in every direction. Some knelt often before a shrine, and breathed a prayer for guidance, and for strength to guide their way; but many passed on, unmindful of the altars so frequently raised, and regardless of HIM to whom they were erected.

As I wandered through the arches, and among the courts, I perceived



that three slight shadowy forms always accompanied me. She, who was ever before me, with her face turned to mine, wore a countenance of exceeding beauty, and upon her I rivetted my gaze. She, who was behind me, was of a mild expression, but on her face were the traces of by-gone sorrows. She saw that I loved not to look upon her, and veiled her face from my sight. She, who was close to my side, I minded not; but stepped forward, as careless of her presence, as we are of the shadow cast under our feet by the meridian sun. I pressed onward to the vision fronting me, but she receded from my advancing steps; and, at length, I found that the lovely face was false in its beauty, that the fascinating figure wore always a mask. Then I turned inquiringly to those around me, and saw that all were accompanied by three similar figures. Some, like myself, were only intent upon the cheating phantom before them; some, disgusted with her, had turned in bitterness, and sat motionless face to face with her who followed. Some, regardless of either, were busy with her who was at their side; and some were judiciously and equally mindful of the three.

Then I resolved to heed not unduly the masked being who had charmed me on, and, turning to her who followed me, I unveiled her face, and impressed her lineaments upon my heart; but she, at my side, whom I had so neglected, I embraced in my arms; and, sinking together at the base of an altar, we dedicated ourselves to God in the temple that He had prepared for us.

"Ye voices, that arose  
After the evening's close,  
And whispered to my restless heart repose!

Go, breathe it in the ear  
Of all who doubt and fear,  
And say to them, "Be of good cheer!" "

ELLA.

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### MISS HANNAH MORE.

In reading the tracts, and some of the other writings, of Miss Hannah More, I have sometimes thought how great the contrast between this estimable lady, and some of our modern writers.

She constantly inculcates patience, resignation, an unmurmuring reception of the yoke; an unquestioning submission to "the powers that be," and the calm acceptance of whatever ill they may choose to bestow.

The humble man is taught that he must here be the mule, the camel, the unrepublishing beast of burden, and that virtue consists in silent acquiescence to his lot. To another world must he look for all that gives pleasure to existence, and resign to others an undue share of the joys of this life.

Was this lady right? We should hardly think so here; and yet to those whom she addressed, her words were perhaps the best philosophy. Theirs was a different lot from ours; and different, perhaps, their duties, and responsibilities.

The judgment of Miss More may hardly be questioned; but the Chartists will not read her tracts, while they are starving for want of bread.

F.

## AUNT MATILDA.

"TELL us a story, Aunt Matilda," said I, as a party of my young friends burst with me into her little sanctum, one cold winter evening.

Aunt Matilda took the great wing, which was transfixed upon a nail in the corner of the fireplace, and *winged* the hearth with it; then she put more wood upon the bright flaming brands, which filled the fireplace, placed a chair for each romping girl, and laid aside our cloaks and hoods.

"Did you run a mile, this cold night, just to hear one of an old maid's stories?" asked she.

"Not for that only," I replied; "but the moon was shining so very brilliantly, and the snow sparkled as brightly upon the earth as the stars did in the sky, and the cold air seemed so bracing that we felt as though we must do something, and the boys had all gone away with their skates and sleds, and so we unanimously moved an adjournment to Miss Matilda Armstrong's sitting-room."

"You should all have brought your knitting-work," said Aunt Matilda, who had just been setting the heel in a very long blue stocking.

"Well, aunt, we cannot go back for it now, and we must have a story. Please to tell us something about Boston. Didn't you go there once when you was young? And do tell us why you never got married? Didn't you ever have a beau?"

"You should never ask but one question at a time," said Aunt Matilda, "but several of these I can answer at once. Let me put some apples upon the hearth to warm, and then I will tell you a story."

There was an extra brush given the hearth, before the big red apples were placed before the fire, like a single file of red coats, before the blaze of "Old Hickory," and there they sputtered an accompaniment while Aunt Matilda told her story.

"It is twenty years this very winter," said she, "since I was invited to spend a few months in Boston, with the relative for whom I was named, and who had often, in summer, enjoyed the pleasure of a home with us, amid the bracing airs of our Green Mountains, and the pleasures of country life in far Vermont. I was then a bright-eyed, red-cheeked, glossy-haired girl, in the eighteenth year of my age, as full of glee as an untamed colt, and as confident of success in that great adventure of woman's life, the attainment of a husband, as such girls usually are. I will not tell you now of the journey to Boston, and the impression which that great city first made upon me, accustomed as I was to the heart of the country, nor to the commencement of my acquaintance with Gilbert Dean, for we did not fall in love at *first sight*. But Gilbert was deeply enamored of every thing countryfied. That any thing, or any body, came from the country was as much of a recommendation to him, as it usually is the reverse to most of the Boston beaux. He had been brought up in the country, and though obliged to live in the city until he became his own master, yet he often expressed his determination to retire then to those peaceful haunts, where his heart had ever lingered. But while residing in that excellent and intellectual city, he had availed himself of every means of improvement which it afforded him. His manners, and intellectual attainments, were far above his years and station, and his personal attrac-



tions were such, that many a Boston belle would not have disdained a smile from the handsome 'prentice boy.'

"It was not until he learned that I was from Vermont that he particularly noticed me. Then he perceived that my bloom was not the result of Parisian *rouge*; then he saw that my glossy locks were not bestowed by the barber, nor the effects of Rowland's Macassar Oil; then he knew that my ivory teeth had not been whitened by the dentist; then he knew that I was in truth, all I had seemed, the very personification of health, innocence, and vivacity. He became a constant visitor at my relative's house, and when bantered upon the subject did not deny that I was the charm which brought him there. Perhaps, girls, you do not know what it is to think you are beloved—to feel sure of it, yet not to know it—to believe that your image is enshrined in the heart of another, as theirs is cherished by you—to place upon each act, and look, and tone, the construction which your own affection tells you would be the suggestion of love. Yes, I knew that Gilbert loved me, and I was proud of it; and also proud of my love for him. Gilbert and I had never talked of love, but then we had never had the opportunity. We had never been alone, and it was only by the eyes that our mutual confessions had been made. It was only when he depicted the charms of rural life in the abstract, that I could know how much of happiness he wished to confer, and receive, in a future life with me.

"At length I was sent for home—sickness was the cause of the unexpected call, and I must go immediately; not on account of imminent danger, but because my services were needed. I had been invited to a large party for the evening after I received this intelligence. I had anticipated it with much pleasure, as an opportunity for more unrestrained communion with Gilbert than I had ever enjoyed. We could be more alone, in that great assembly, than when subjected to the scrutiny of our domestic circle. I had thought that things would there be expressed which had heretofore been only intimated. And now I was sure of it, for a mutual confession would be almost necessary before we should part. I arrayed myself that night in my little stock of finery, my gold ear-rings, beads, and rings. I wore a red crape gown, trimmed with crimped satin ribbon. I had a stomacher, and starched ruff, high-heeled shoes, and open-work stockings, and a large black-handled fan, with painted pictures of boys and girls upon it. My face assumed its rosiest hue, as Gilbert approached, and took a seat at my side, and I could hardly feel sad as I perceived his countenance fall when I told him that I was going home.

"For a few moments we were alone—all around were shadows, or floating phantasmagoria, and we two were all that was real, was living in that great circle. But in the midst of this bliss, ere it had time to dissolve itself into words, I became aware that my dress was loosening behind. Yes; I was *undone*. I had dressed in too much perturbation to pay the needful attention to the pins, buttons, hooks and eyes, which are indispensable attendants to a lady's wardrobe.

"What to do I did not know, but one thing I knew I must not do—I must not *move*. In perfect immobility was my only safety. I must stay bound, fettered, chained, transfixed, rooted to the spot, by those departed hooks and eyes. Girls, you may not have been able to conceive of my feelings before, but I think you can understand my distress of mind at this juncture. I could not attend to any thing that was said to me, and did not

attempt to say any thing myself. Gilbert addressed some words to me in a low tone, and with much affection in his manner, but I did not heed him. He repeated his expressions, but obtained no word or look of sympathy. At length he perceived that I was absent, restless, and unhappy. At first he appeared amazed and perplexed. He wished to know if I was ill, and offered to take me home. I told him I was very well, that I did not wish to go home, I wanted to stay and witness the amusements of the others, though not to partake of them. He noticed the fretfulness with which I replied, and attributed it to unhappiness at our approaching separation. He tried to soothe me, and invited me to promenade the room with him. I promptly and decidedly refused his proffered arm, and expressed my wish to be left alone. A new light burst upon him, as he looked upon my flushed face, and he remembered then that I had listened to his expressions of regret at our approaching separation, and to his intimated hopes of a future reunion, without one word of expressed acquiescence, in his wishes and feelings. Then he remembered also that his evident attachment had been returned by looks and tones, which none but lovers know and understand, and now that he was upon the point of declaring himself I was dashing the cup of hope and joy from his lips. I had heard so much, and till now had listened without reluctance—I had permitted so much, and till now without evincing displeasure. A flush of indignation rose to his cheeks and brow, and bending his face towards me, for a moment, with a look which seemed to say, ‘You are a heartless coquette,’ he left me. I saw him choose another, and devote to her with redoubled assiduity the attentions he had paid to me. He was trying with all his might to look, and *be* happy. He laughed and talked with others—he tried to forget me—he thought I did not love him—that I had trifled with him. O, if he could only have seen my heart—or *my back*. But he could not forget me. Once, when our eyes met, the mournful expression of mine touched him instantly, and he came towards me. Just then a lady near me dropped a locket upon the floor. It rolled towards me, and was hidden by the folds of my dress. I did not assist in the search for it, though I knew better than any one where it was. At length I was requested to *rise*, that they might look where I sat. What could I do? I felt around with my foot until I found it, and then kicked it towards the owner. My rudeness aroused the anger of all, and they left me with disdainful silence. I dared not look up to Gilbert, as he stood by my chair, and felt relieved when he walked away.

“At length the party broke up, and I requested that my bonnet and shawl might be brought to me. When I was fairly enveloped in the latter I felt like a new being. I laughed, and chatted, and ran around to see all those from whom I had kept myself aloof during the evening, but when I looked for Gilbert I saw that he had a little arm in his, and knew that I should see him no more. I have never met him since; I have never loved another. I am now an old maid; and now, girls, eat your apples, and always pay strict attention to your hooks and eyes.”

When we left Aunt Matilda that night we all agreed that she could tell a good story, and that we would willingly run a mile to hear another.

CAMILLA.



## THE TRUE MOURNER.

The King of Scotland, James VI., ordered his courtiers to appear at the palace in mourning, at the announcement of the murder of his mother, Mary, Queen of Scots. One nobleman came in complete armor, as the mourning suit best befitting this occasion.

THE deed was done; and Scotland's queen  
A murdered victim lay;  
For England's minions well I ween  
Their ruthless queen obey.

And Scotia's king sends forth his word  
That all to him repair,  
With sable weeds, to Holyrood,  
Those emblems of despair.

A thronging host surround their king  
With mantle black and plume;  
With sounds of woe the court-yards ring,  
The palace rests in gloom.

But, see! that dark-robed host among  
Intruding footsteps dare;  
Yet *he*, amidst the sable throng,  
Was the true mourner there.

The corselet pressed a swelling breast;  
The casque concealed hot tears;  
The sword, which scarcely lay at rest,  
Fit mourning badge appears.

Thus should we grieve whene'er we see  
Our fellow-men oppressed;  
Our sisters, "by one holy tie,"  
With wrongs all unredressed;

Not tamely should sit down and mourn,  
But nerve us for the fight;  
Should gird our sword and armor on,  
And battle for the right.

H. F.

## THE LAST OF THE PURITANS.

THERE is now living in the town of Thetford, Vt., an aged man named Ezra F\*\*\*\*. He was born in Braintree, Mass., in the year 1754; of course now ninety years of age. This singular man the writer saw while on a visit to the country last summer, and was from the first much interested by his quaint appearance and conversation. He does not exhibit the marks of extreme age; he is still a man of very good sense, and retains his mental faculties nearly unimpaired. He abounds in anecdote and recollections of past reading; and can tell much of the world, for he has lived in it as a man of influence and respectability.

His present style of living, however, is calculated rather to excite amuse-

ment than respect. His dress, when I saw him, was white cotton throughout; frock, shirt, and trowsers; no stockings, naked ankles, and shoes of which "one was a mate, the other an odd one." The elder of the two was seventeen years old; the other much more juvenile, being but ten. He practises an economy nearly equal to that of John Wesley, when he maintained himself upon sixpence per week. His method is to buy a bag of meal once or twice in a year, and when the family, with whom he lodges, bake, he gets permission to put a small loaf of bread into the oven. He also purchases a bushel or two of potatoes, and, when the family boil their pot, he craves the privilege of putting a potato into it. He purchases a pint or quart of milk, for one or two cents, each morning or evening, and lives, without the use of meat, on milk and bread, like Graham, "only a great deal more so."

But the most remarkable characteristic of the man is his puritanical rigidness and orthodoxy. He would never listen to a preacher who was not decidedly Calvinistic, and has always kept the Lord's-day, as our good ancestors did, who "seethed" their Sunday dinner on Saturday, and whipped the beer and cider barrels for working on the sabbath. When the weather is moderate, and the roads good, he puts on his go-to-meeting suit, and walks two miles to attend public worship. He lives out the character and habits which he has been cherishing through his long, and, in some respects, varied life.

In his early childhood he learned to be industrious, economical, truthful, sober-minded; all the puritanical virtues. At the age of twenty-six he emigrated into Washington, N. H., then a new town with a cold soil, on the backbone ridge which divides the valley of the Merrimack from that of the Connecticut. Being worth eight hundred dollars he commenced business as a store-keeper, in an unfinished room, having a board, laid on the heads of two barrels, for his counter. This was in 1780. By the year 1800 he had acquired a good estate; was the most prominent man in town; built him the best house; kept a hotel for travellers; had his good mother for house-keeper; gave up his store, and lived as a gentleman farmer. He entertained gratis all the Calvinistic ministers who came into the town; but would not keep an Armenian, on any terms, unless he obtruded himself under a false cloak. Whenever company arrived at his hotel on Saturday evening, and called for lodgings, he inquired of them if they intended to travel on the sabbath. If that was their intention he refused to entertain them. There being then no other house of entertainment in the town, travellers, at night, and in bad weather, lay at his mercy. He sometimes exercised his power with extreme severity. A man, who came to him with his wife and child, on an intensely cold night, when the roads were blocked up with snow, was denied admittance, and turned out to shift for himself as he could. The late Hon. Fisher Ames, then in a delicate state of health, and in the midst of one of the heaviest rains that ever fell in New England, was refused lodgings, and compelled to pass the night in a miserable shanty. And this was really done for conscience' sake—not for the sake of being ugly, (we use the word in the Yankee sense) or of acting the petty tyrant. He thought it was his duty; that he was manifesting a holy zeal for the institution of God; and in this mistake he might probably plead many examples of his puritan predecessors.

When he had attained the age of fifty years, his mother being dead, he felt the want of some one to "guide the house." Being now old enough



to marry, and the experience of half a century having qualified him to make choice of a wife, he looked around, for a season, and then made proposals to a young widow of Newport, N. H., the relict of Rev. Mr. S., of East Plainfield. They were married, and in the course of some four or five years he became the father of two children. But he was not now a happy man. His wife, though an excellent and discreet woman, did not meet all his wishes. She was much more free and liberal in her management of the household than he had been accustomed to be. This was a constant vexation, but not the worst of his troubles. He had furnished a nephew with capital on which to trade; had also become an endorser for him. This relative failed in business, and brought in his uncle for some thousands of dollars. These troubles, occurring coincidently, threw him into a state of desperation. He took the resolution to abscond, leaving his sick wife and her infant child, his property, consisting of houses and lands, to the merciless hands of his creditors. He might, as he now says, by managing the concern himself, have cleared off all his liabilities, and saved a thousand dollars. But his vexation silenced the voice of his sober judgment. He turned his back on a scene, the sight of which made him desperate. The property, which he had spent thirty years in accumulating, now went to the winds. His house, which had cost him twenty-five hundred dollars, was sold for eight hundred. In a similar manner went all the rest of his estate. His good wife found an asylum in the house of her father at Newport.

Our "puritan" went first to the eastward, and spent some months in the state of Maine, where he had a brother. He then turned and went to Connecticut, where he had another brother. Neither of his brothers, however, did much for his relief. He must therefore do something for himself, or lie down and die. He had, in his youth, sometimes tended a mill. He now went to the proprietor of one, offered his services, and they were accepted. And in this service he continued for ten years, during which time he laid up one thousand dollars of his limited wages. He then returned to Newport, where he found his wife; and two daughters, one twelve and the other fourteen years of age, sprightly and well-educated girls. He offered himself again to his wife, but was refused. He was willing to be once more her husband, and a father to her children; but he had once abandoned her, and she judged it more prudent not to give him the opportunity to do it again. He made his best excuses for his past conduct, and she accepted them for what they were worth. He tarried in Newport for a year or two, and spent perhaps one-half of his time in the house of his wife. He then went to Thetford, where he now lives.

We have already given a slight description of his manner of life. He keeps his affairs so close that nobody knows whether the one thousand dollars, acquired in Connecticut, is now increased or diminished. This money has been his estate for twenty years; and perhaps he has enjoyed it as much as he did when it was ten times larger. His first estate was the product of the thirty best years of his life. The second that of ten years of his old age. During the first period he moved in the first class of society. During the second he was in obscurity—the tender of a gristmill in the town of Hadlyme, near the mouth of the noble Connecticut. Thus has he realized the "ups and downs," the vexations and pleasures, the sunshine and shade, of life. He has outlived his family, for his wife, and daughters,

who had respectably married, are now dead. But through all this the stamen of his character has been always the same. He has ever been a stern puritan. In one important instance, however, his self-command seems to have failed him. He acted in opposition to his pecuniary interest, and made a sacrifice of himself and family to his vexation of spirit.

There are useful lessons to be drawn from his history; but, having given the facts, may it not devolve upon the reader to draw forth "the uses by way of improvement."

ANNETTE.

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### DEAL GENTLY.

"Can you name her now so lightly?  
Once the idol of you all:—  
When a star has shone so brightly,  
Can you glory in its fall?"

*T. Moore.*

THERE were loud voices in Madam Bradshaw's little sitting-room: tones of anger, derision, and reproach, uttering words of detraction. Madam sat silently listening to her young visitors, but her brow contracted, and her lips compressed, as harsh feelings seemed to strengthen by an open expression of them. She remembered that just one year before Sophy Melton had come to visit her, with the same young ladies who were now paying her their annual visit.

Madam Bradshaw was the widow of the old village clergyman; who, when he died, left her poor, though not destitute. In the parish she had been much respected and beloved, and there was no fear that Madam would ever be left to want, among so many friends. They had a very delicate way of bestowing their bounty, and made several annual parties; when they went to the old parsonage always "carrying their welcome." The children went when her cherries were ripe; the married ladies at Thanksgiving time, bringing their bounties; the elderly spinsters—considerate souls—just after Fast, and did her spring cleaning for her, and replenished her exhausted winter stores. The misses came when her roses were in blossom, and her front garden was one little wilderness of fragrant beauty. Then they did up her summer caps, collars, and neckerchiefs, and saw that her wardrobe needed no addition.

Among those who came with the roses, "herself a fairer flower," had been Sophy Melton; but this year she was absent, and Madam missed her bright smile and sweet voice. The morning was busily passed by the girls in washing, starching, and ironing—the afternoon in mending and making for the good old lady.

But now the sewing was all done, the tea-table had been nicely cleared away, and, as twilight came on, the girls sat in the old parlor talking of their past and future annual visits. How they loved this old room—the old pictures in their heavy frames—the dark mahogany, polished to the brightness of crystal—the worn and faded but spotless carpet, the old china, as perfect as ever—the well-kept silver, and her store of curiosities as curious as ever. Then there were her portraits, upon which they all loved to gaze. There was the old pastor himself, looking at them from the canvass as benignly as he had ever done from the pulpit. There was the



son, who had gone a missionary to foreign lands, and left name and fame, if naught else, to his fond mother. There was the noble boy, too, who left his mother for a long voyage to the Arctic seas, and was never heard of more. There was the mild but steadfast daughter, who had gone to the far West, and laid down her life in that home missionary enterprise, the education of the young. The girls loved to look upon those relics, and feel, awakening in themselves, aspirations for that excellence which had been embodied and lived by those who had now passed away.

Perhaps they imagined they were showing respect for virtue by their severe remarks upon Sophy Melton; but Madam Bradshaw was evidently displeased. At length she spoke:

“Can you name her now so lightly?” &c.

The girls were abashed for a moment.

But Caroline Freeman replied, “Ma’ Bradshaw, I have not yet spoken; but I have not attempted to stop my friends, for it has always appeared to me that the reproach of the good was but the just penalty for this violation of the laws of virtue. Sophy’s error has not brought upon her poverty, pain, or any diminution of the physical enjoyments of life. If her friends must still, from motives of compassion or philanthropy, countenance her, where is the punishment society should inflict for contempt of its opinions?”

“I asked you not to countenance her, or associate with her, not to speak lightly of her sin, or accustom yourselves to think of it as a venial error; but, my dear girls, I only beg of you to *deal gently*. Let compassion, rather than resentment, influence your thoughts of her. I have seen anger where I would have beheld grief. Moreover, may there not be too much self-confidence exhibited in such remarks. You place yourselves among the *good*. Sophy has perhaps once thought herself as good, as safe as either of you. She was the most beautiful, the most fascinating of you all, therefore the most tried and tempted. Be not angry with me, when I bid you ask yourselves whether there is not a little gratified envy in all these aspersions of your fallen sister; whether there is not a slight feeling of triumph, that the first has now become the last; that she who was greatest is now the least among you?”

“O, Ma’ Bradshaw! *deal gently* with us. We never envied her; we were proud that one so beautiful, and, as we thought, so good, was of our little band. We do not rejoice, we mourn that the most beautiful star is lost from our little constellation. But, how are we to show our hatred of wickedness, unless we speak severely of sin? Were we to speak mildly of this fault, might we not be misunderstood? You must remember that our principles have not been tested by a long life, as our dear Ma’ Bradshaw’s have been.”

“My dear girls,” said Madam, “do not think there is no better way of showing your detestation of sin than by reproach or vituperation of the fellow being who has fallen into it. Keep your own garments spotless, your own hearts clean, your own hands unstained, and then fear not that your commiseration of the sinful and guilty will ever be misunderstood—that pity will be mistaken for sympathy, that kindness will be thought weakness. Never fear, with a clear conscience and a firm heart, to *deal gently*.  
B.

## EDITORIAL.

**THE IMPROVEMENT CIRCLE.** Many of our subscribers feel quite an interest in the management and prospects of the Offering, and we have often been asked how we procure articles for our magazine. Our old subscribers know something already of The Improvement Circle, which furnished the budget from which the Offering was first selected. Within a few years seven of these literary societies have been formed, all of which are now dead but the one with which we are connected. This is now in quite a flourishing condition, and we find upon the records the last item to be this: "May 13th. . . . Eighteen members were present, and the following articles read: The Lost Gem; The Fatal Letter; The Orphan; Evening Reflections; Factory Labor; The Indian Maid. The perusal of other articles deferred until the next meeting of the Circle."

The constitution of this Circle was drawn up by the young ladies; without assistance or advice of "lawyers," or other professional characters. The following is a copy.

"Art. I. This society shall be called the Merrimack Division of the Young Ladies' Improvement Circle, having for its general object mutual improvement.

"Art. II. The officers of this society shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Critic, to be chosen once in six months, who, in connection with the officers of the various other divisions, shall constitute a board of managers to direct the affairs of the Improvement Circle.

"Art. III. The President, by virtue of her office, shall preside at the meetings of the society, calling the meeting to order, causing it to be opened with prayer, and otherwise directing its exercises. The Vice President shall aid her by co-operation and counsel, and in her absence shall perform the duties of the President.

"Art. IV. The Secretary shall record the doings of the society, the time and place of each meeting, and the names of the members. She shall keep an account of the number present, the names of those who take an active part in the exercises; also, the subject of each communication, when and by whom presented, and report to the society when requested. She shall likewise notify the Secretary of each of the other Divisions of the time and place of the next following meeting of her own Division, as soon as may be after such meeting shall have been appointed.

"Art. V. The Critic shall receive and faithfully correct all communications presented, and be responsible for their return unless permitted to make other use of them, in which case her responsibility shall cease when they pass into other hands.

"Art. VI. The Board of Managers shall be the standing officers of the Improvement Circle, from whom a President and Secretary pro tem. shall be chosen at each meeting of the Circle. They shall appoint quarterly meetings, and such other meetings as they deem expedient. They shall guard the interests of the Circle, and adopt such plans for its prosperity as in their judgment shall seem to be needed.

"Art. VII. This society shall meet at such place as shall have been appointed during the first week in each month. If prevented from so doing the meeting shall stand adjourned to the time and place of the meeting of the next division in the same month. In either case no member shall plead inability as a reason for excusing herself from performing any duty the society may require of her.

"Art. VIII. Any young lady of good moral character may become a member of this society by signing its constitution and presenting an original communication once a month, and by so doing she is entitled to all the privileges of each division. If necessarily detained from a meeting she shall feel under the same obligation to another division during the month. Her communication may partly atone for her absence, although in all such cases she must be able to render a reason.

"Art. IX. This constitution may be amended or revised at any quarterly meeting of the Circle, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, provided such amendment shall have been previously presented at a regular meeting of each of the divisions."

It has been since amended, and meets now every alternate Monday evening.—We would take this opportunity to give a general invitation to the female operatives of Lowell to join this Circle; with the assurance that they can hardly fail, by their presence and compliance with our regulations, to receive and impart both pleasure and instruction.

H. F.